



The Infant.

Ex pede Herculem —

*When once we've scannd th' Herculean head or foot
Soon may we add a long &c: to 't.*



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THE

FEMALE KIDNAPPERS;

OR, THE

RAPE OF THE INFANT:

A P O E M.

Si qua fides Vulnus quod feci non dolet.

MARTIAL.

I M I T A T E D.

Be't mine to smile when widow'd dames are fickle;
 Not stab, like Mars, but, like gay ~~Adonis~~, tickle.

Dux Femina facti——

VIRGIL.

I M I T A T E D.

When art's the point, apply to no man;—
 That province all belongs to woman.

L O N D O N:

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M DCC LXXXII.



T O
JOHN SCHR—BER, INFANT, Esq.
THIS POEM
IS JOCOSELY INSCRIBED
B Y
A TRUE LOVER OF INFANTS,
WIDOWS, AND THE MUSES.

The quondam widow, now once more a wife,
Like one just rais'd from death to second life,
Exclaim'd, as consummation blifs began,
" Ne'er did an INFANT act so like a MAN."

See page 22.

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1911

A TRUE STORY OF THE

WIDOW AND THE MURDER

BY

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COME WE NOW TO
A N
ADVERTISEMENT
TO THE
CRITICS.

GENTLEMEN, &c.

IF you expect to find my POEM of the exact length, breadth, bulk and shape of any one of those classes into which you are pleased to divide and subdivide them, it is the business of this Note civilly to inform you that you may possibly be disappointed in your expectations.

You may, however, if you please, call it an Epic Poem—If there is not a HERO in it, you will certainly find an HEROINE, whose exploits are, in my opinion, more proper to be introduced into the Court of APOLLO, than into that of CHANCERY—and ought rather to come under the gentle lash of half-approving satire, than feel the smart

B

of

of that keen censure, which a certain[†] great Lawyer and Statesman, in the ardor of his honest zeal, was pleased to give them.—'Tis with submission to much longer heads than mine—or, perhaps (begging your pardon) yours.

Should you be inclined to turn up your noses at this BOUQUET, which I have been at some pains to gather on different parts of Mount Parnassus, as here and there interspersed with WILD flowers that rather smell rank—blast them not rashly; but remember that, though I sing *of* Infants, I do not sing *for* them; and that, where a man has to do with a Widow, he need not be afraid to mix, now and then, an innocent WEED with his SIMPLES —

If this gentle dose should operate, so as to mix a little honey with your usual gall, I shall heartily wish that you may do—what we poor devils seldom can when we fall into your hands, that is—

FAREWELL.

[†] *Shurlow, Lord Chancellor.*

THE
RAPE OF THE INFANT.

A P O E M.

WHEN youthful Cupid in some widow'd dame
Stirs the warm embers of his former flame ;
When mem'ry casts her eye on past delights,
And sense compares them with unsocial nights ;
When ardent fancy sets before her view
In clearest lights how ONE and ONE make two ;
'Tis then, O ! then she floats on Passion's wave ;
And e'en regrets the fellow in the grave !
Then, like the dew from dropping skies distill'd,
To spread rich moisture o'er the thirsty field,
Love to her with unfolds his genial store,
Thrills ev'ry pulse, and melts in ev'ry pore :

Rekindling

Rekindling ardor rages in her breast,
 And keen regret deprives her soul of rest.
 Scarce from one lordly tyrant's empire free'd,
 Her next concern is who shall next succeed;
 And in one breath she spurns his haughty reign,
 And ardent sighs to wear a second chain.
 For this, sagacious as the tutor'd hound,
 She beats, in quest of game, the fields around;
 For this, allures her prey with accents meek,
 And lays th' ensnaring bird-lime on her cheek;
 Watchful she sits, the treach'rous man-trap set,
 And spreads around the heart-beguiling net:
 Nor quits the chace (save fate her labour foils)
 Till some young GOLDFINCH pants within her toils;
 Which whistling in the matrimonial cage,
 May charm the terrors of approaching age.—

Almira thus, to poignant grief a prey,
 Sigh'd the dull hours of widow'd gloom away.
 With aching heart in seas of anguish tost,
 She number'd o'er each day of pleasure lost,
 And, as some warrior in the martial field,
 When lost his sturdy truncheon and his shield,
 Reluctant quits the labours of the day,
 She longs in vain to share the vig'rous fray.

When

When the gay Spring, that gladè the smiling plains
Had fill'd with brisker tides the swelling veins;
That *je ne sçai quoi* which fires the raging blood
The genial influence of her sex renew'd:
Nature, whose force in ev'ry shrub she saw,
Brought to her mind it's universal law:
On ev'ry spray, as o'er the lawn she stray'd,
Pleas'd she beheld that blissful law obey'd:
The Dove which oft in dying accents coo'd
Thro' the lone precincts of the list'ning wood;
The sighing breeze, the gently-murm'ring rill,
With softer murm'rings all her fancy fill.
The lordly Bull, that near the tinkling fold,
Pants for delight like mettled Jove of old,
When that wise God forsook th' ambrosial feast,
And for Europa's smiles put on the beast—
From the mean reptile arm'd with pois'nous sting,
To each gay fowl that spreads the founding wing,
What side soe'er her eager view she turns,
All Nature with the gen'rous ardor burns!—
Whilst *she*, of all Creation's race alone,
'Midst general transports sigh'd in vain for *one*!—
But say what madness ev'ry passion fir'd,
Whene'er by Hymen's sacred flame inspir'd,

New yoke-mate couples fought the nuptial bow'r,
And founding peals announc'd the blissful hour?
When rumour told a parent's boundless joy,
For some fair daughter, or some wish'd-for boy?
Or when sly rev'rence with uplifted hands
And blinking eye declar'd th' approaching banns?
Like them she long'd to tread the sacred porch,
And feel the blaze of Hymen's flaming torch!—
Oft to old Drury would the nymph resort
Where am'rous play and laughter hold their court;
Or to their rivals in the mimic line,
To hear the tragic rant and piteous whine—
There from Love's gay entrenchments would she dart
Her fiery glances at th' unguarded heart.
Now the full slips, and now the gall'ries scour,
Now in the pit her broadside briskly pour:
Or when at noon each nymph and gaudy spark
Taste the cool pleasures of the crouded Park,
Full in the Mall, with shrouds and rigging loose,
To each gay youth hang out her flag of truce—
At Ran'lagh too, where giddy heads go round,
And beating hearts to beating time rebound;
Where beauty's orbs 'midst kindred splendors roll,
Attun'd like stars that gild the vaulted pole:

Oft

Oft did she (in that market of the fair)
With curious art display her brittle ware.
In vain—for, tho' from speck and blemish clear,
Each turn'd his heel, and thought the lot too dear.

Once here indeed, beneath the rural bowers,
Fond Cupid 'twind his wreath of blooming flow'rs :
But now that God may twine the wreath in vain,
'Till Av'rice link it with his golden chain.—

Thus long Almira ev'ry art essay'd
Once more to mount the wish'd-for nuptial bed—
Her lamp replete with oil and trimm'd with care,
(Th' expected bride-groom some well-furnish'd heir)
She waits to fill both Love and Plenty's horn,
And laugh the foolish virgin tribe to scorn.
This ev'ry day employ'd some artful scheme ;
This ev'ry night compos'd her luscious dream ;—
And this e'en now, perhaps, had rack'd her brain,
Nor aught ere this have eas'd her anxious pain,
Had not that god, whose pow'r we all confess,
Prepar'd alike to wound us or to bless,
That god, who, ending matrimonial strife,
Renews the faintly-glowing spark of life—
Cupid, in short (since I his name must tell),
Deign'd the long tumult of her breast to quell.

But

But ere for that gay tale my lyre be strung,
A theme neglected claims my willing song.
When I observ'd, that spite of all her skill,
No youth was found to take the gilded pill;
None but that hungry tribe, I should have said,
Who seek not feasts of *beauty*, but of *bread*:
Of these whole legions court with wild grimace,
As S——s cringe at levees for a place.
In dauntless guise Hybernian rovers came,
Unrival'd huntsmen of the female game;
Fierce they pursue, and panting hard for breath,
Brush into cover, and mature the death.
Rich in pure Nature's best possession, health,
Which still they barter for fame or wealth;
With robes that hardly hide their native buff,
(In all things else, by Jafus, poor enough)
In downright brogue their honest plan they told,
Which proffer'd pleasure, and which ask'd for gold—
Awhile the Widow waver'd in suspense;
Love pleaded hard for naked excellence;
But soon Reflection lent her wholesome aid,
(Which ne'er had come in time to save a maid)
And Prudence whisper'd in her ear to wait
Till time or chance should gild the proffer'd bait.

With

With doubtful hopes (by which *alone*, I ween,
 Too oft is satisfy'd the stomach keen)
 Enthusiast bards, in sad and dismal plight,
 Did many a lengthen'd madrigal indite :
 These spoke their pains, themselves at home confin'd,
 By unbleach'd linen, or by duns unkind.
 Poor souls ! to think by empty squibs to gain
 That fort which fiery balls attack'd in vain !
 The sonnet smooth, the madrigal so bland,
 Are all consign'd to Betty's cruel hand ;
 And soon must serve to light quite other fires
 Than those which rise from Cupid's warm desires.
 Nor did *alone* the buxom Widow strive
 To lure gay insects to her glowing hive,
 But sent her tutor'd proxies far and wide,
 Still in fond hopes again to shine a bride,
 Agreed, if fates should smile, to give them snacks,
 Reserve the honey, and divide the wax.

But now 'tis time the sequel to rehearse,
 Where Cupid shines the hero of the farce,
 Who, as I told you, if you've not forgot,
 Engag'd to work the winding of the plot.

'Twas night—(if now 'tis not, suppose it so)
 O'er heav'n's wide arch the vivid planets glow—

D

What

What pity 'tis that here no space remains
T'indulge gay fancy in descriptive strains !
Almira then, as on her couch she lay,
Renew'd the various wishes of the day.
Half-doubting, half-resolv'd, if should prove
The begg'ring transports of Hybernian love ;
Till o'er her eyes aerial slumbers creep,
And pleasing dreams amuse the hours of sleep.

That time the God of wanton frenzy chose
To end the lengthen'd series of her woes :
On silent wings he cleaves the fields of air,
To where entranc'd was laid the melting fair ;
Then in soft accents o'er her couch reclin'd,
Thus charms the list'ning transport of her mind :

“ O thou, who late, to thine immortal praise,

“ *Not* vestal-like kept up my hallow'd blaze !

“ Thou, who, of all the hymeneal line,

“ Still burnt most off'rings at my flaming shrine,

“ Hear, and attend what Cupid now decrees

“ To give thy long-molested mind to ease :

“ No more secluded from my mystic rites,

“ Whilst ev'ry charm of health and youth invites ;

“ No more shall frost thy full-blown roses blight,

“ Nor *fruitless* sighs prolong the tedious night ;

“ Hence

"Hence doom'd to feel my warm prolific glow,
 "Whil'st still renew'd, thy streams of rapture flow."

As in her ears the grateful tidings rung,
 Quick from her couch the ravish'd matron sprung:
 Joy! rapture! bliss! exclaim'd th' exulting fair;
 Then spent her idle grasp in empty air.

Deceitful hope! with wild and sad surprize,
 She sighing said, and rubb'd her swimming eyes;

Soon as returning reason shot its gleam,
 Gods! she exclaim'd, and is it all a dream?

"No," cry'd the God, to calm her hasty fright,

"No airy phantom cheats thy erring sight;

"To ease thy mind from grief's oppressive load

"The Pow'r of Love forsakes his blest abode.

"Know, lovely fair, thy ev'ry grief to drown,

"Soon shall an INFANT all thy wishes crown."

"AN INFANT!—Gods!" Almira said and sigh'd;

"AN INFANT!" strait the youthful rogue reply'd.

"An Infant!—ah! deluding God of Love,

"Not so; for, witness ev'ry pow'r above!

"Since late I lost my matrimonial drone,

"(Hard fate!) I've *spent* each irksome night alone!"

(weeping.)

At this the son of Cyprian Venus smil'd,

Then thus the anguish of her heart beguil'd:

"Mysteridus

“ Mysterious sense my dubious meaning cloaks ;
“ Experience soon shall clear the paradox.
“ Learn how by me thy off’rings are repaid.”
He said, and paus’d—the willing nymph obey’d.
“ Not far from where the stately doom of Paul,
“ Lifts the tall head o’er Britain’s capital,
“ Full many a year has liv’d a sober cit,
“ More fam’d for plodding industry than wit.
“ There, to increase his stock by honest gain,
“ He long has *labour’d hard*, but not *in vain* ;
“ For, where one frugal pudding forms the board,
“ The cit in time may rise above my lord ;
“ With him immur’d his hopeful INFANT dwells,
“ Rais’d into bulk by potent magic spells—
“ Not such a dwindling half-engender’d thing
“ As now, too oft, your squeamish matrons bring,
“ Firm is his chest, and nervous ev’ry pore,
“ Untouch’d his mine of rapture’s precious lore ;
“ Untaught by Folly, and unled by whim,
“ Of port elate, and sound in ev’ry limb !
“ What tho’ his chin can boast no manly beard,
“ On Surry’s healthful plains maturely rear’d ;
“ Enrich’d by ten and sev’n revolving suns,
“ His vig’rous blood in purest channels runs !—

“ That

" That blood which soon from mounds coercive free,
 " Shall pour it's strong unblemish'd tide for thee !
 " Think, lovely Nymph, what joys await your arms !
 " To rear this green recruit to Love's alarms !—
 " How will he joy to hear thy known command,
 " Train'd to thy wish, and tutor'd by thy hand !"—

Enough ! enough ! exclaim'd the ardent nymph ;
 Then scarce retaining Nature's struggling lymph.

" Farewell !—Thou heav'nly messenger of joy,
 " Alike desir'd by willing nymphs or coy !
 " Farewell !—And as thy mandates I improve,
 " Or blast or crown the efforts of my love !
 " For soon to all the world it shall be known,
 " That not one mite of former glee is flown !"—

She said—on sounding wings young Cupid flew ;
 Awhile beheld ; then vanish'd from her view !—
 The Widow rose—her inmost dome she sought,
 T' indulge the silent luxury of thought.

To weigh the difference 'twixt her recent gloom,
 And the bright rays of promis'd joys to come !

From visitations quick revolving tide,

What mounds can shelter, what recesses hide ?—

Four kindred nymphs at once her door assail,

These fraught with recent news, and those with stale ;

E

Eager

Eager alike who first shall give it vent
Like sounding bells their ratt'ling clappers went—
Some artful lye around the busy town,
That morn on Scandal's raven wing had flown.
But, if some wealthy patron, off his guard,
Had won the fond allurements of his ward;
Or if some poor provok'd and injur'd wife
Had ta'en revenge of fierce hesternal strife;
Not all the inspiration of my Muse
Can the *dear mischief* to my ear infuse:
'Twas some such matter urg'd their clam'rous chat;
And, since unknown, let's say *no matter what*—
Long time, well oil'd by use and loosely hung,
Wheels like a whirl-wind ev'ry flipp'ry tongue:
And, like a windmill, as it sweeps around,
Grinds the base food for Envy's sigh profound—
As some brave hero, 'midst the storm of war,
(Like Howe the darling of each dauntless tar)
Unmov'd remains, nor feels one panic dread,
Tho' deaths unnumber'd whistles o'er his head;
But pond'ring still, and on his purpose bent,
Holds the just balance of each great event:
So sat Almira, whilst around her fly,
Scandal's keen darts infus'd in Ebon dye—

Fraught

Fraught with delight and Cupid's high behest
The dream celestial labour'd in her breast.

The females saw—and curious next to find
What new event possess'd her thoughtful mind;
Each, searching still what prudence might conceal,
Rung the brisk chime of question's noisy peal—
Nor long the Dame in longing anguish held;
But straight th' effusions of her heart reveal'd:
How like Alcmena, she (tho' not from Jove)
Was blest with pledges of immortal love!—
Describ'd the vig'rous Infant's portly size,
And clear'd th' account of Cupid's mysteries—
When starting from her seat in transports wild,
Thus spoke a nymph who knew the wond'rous child—
“ Belov'd Almira? hence too amply blest!
“ In such a bird to warm thy feather'd nest!
“ Full many a time, since like thyself bereft,
“ Of what few comforts parting youth had left,
“ That man-like Infant have I long'd to nurse,
“ Whilst life should last for better or for worse!
“ For what wise Pallas to his head deny'd,
“ In other boons kind Nature has supply'd.
“ Herculean shoulders, (surest mark of strength!)
“ Hybernian vigour, and proportion'd length!

“ Form

" Form such an Infant-mass of flesh and bone,
 " As Graham's self might not disdain to own !
 " Then come my friend, mistrust not fav'ring skies :
 " Unfurl each sail, and chace the golden prize !
 " Secure that, fill'd with stores for beauty's fort,
 " Soon shalt thou moor it in the wish'd-for port !

When scandal, love, or mischief is in view
 None like the fleeting female race pursue ;
 Scarce granting time for lab'ring fate to hatch it,
 The Dev'l must interfere or they will catch it !—

Rich in alert Invention's golden mint,
 No sooner said than each improv'd the hint.
 This talk'd of ogles, that of dying leers,
 Of borrow'd sighs, and woman's artful tears.
 These plann'd whole realms of ardent billet-doux,
 Those dang'rous omens of the fatal noose !
 T' entrap the Infant all their forces join,
 As Yankee did Cornwallis and Burgoyne.—
 Not Marlborough's self so swift to conquest mov'd,
 As these fair heroines to the sport belov'd !

Why should I sing of each ensnaring art,
 With which our Widow pointed Cupid's dart ?
 How, when at church she rais'd the fly caleche,
 And soon o'ercame the spirit by the flesh ?

With

With how much skill she shot the glance askew,
And pierc'd the fervant Infant in it's pew—
Th' half-dosing tutor mark'd *it's* frequent sigh,
But little thought to what fair deity!—
With beating transport, and with wild amaze,
How did she draw the wond'ring Infant's gaze!
How did *it* stifle passion's soothing moan!
How did *it* pant for bliss as yet unknown!—

Patience awhile thou tender whining babe!
With art not less enchanting than Queen Mab,
Soon shall the fair deluder of thy smiles,
Relieve thy pain by arch and crafty wiles:
Soon shall gay Cupid all his joys impart,
And the quick tide flow briskly round thy heart!
Heroes, not women, (hist'ry proves it so)
Allow free quarter to the vanquish'd foe.

Soon as, experienc'd in the slaughter-ring trade,
They saw the breach which potent Love had made;
What next remain'd, to end the point in form,
But to advance by stratagem or storm?
In both we all the female skill allow;
The first succeeded—and I'll tell you how—
To guard the child from unforeseen mishaps;
To feed *it's* scanty brain with Latin scraps;

But most each spark of am'rous flame to quench;
 A hum-drum tutor of the rev'rend Bench
 From morn till ev'ning was *it's* constant guide,
 Charg'd ne'er to wander from *it's* tender side—
 To lull this Argus, who full oft would blink,
 O'ercome by drowsy age, if not by drink,
 The heroines try—and soon that fort subdu'd,
 But then one stronger obstacle withstood—
 Confin'd with care to his parental home,
 And seldom giv'n beyond that sphere to roam—
 Tho' full-fed rev'rence slept like Flemish lake,
 A parent's watchful eye remain'd awake.

Say Muse, or, since 'tis rhyme you deal in—sing!
 (Awhile forsaking your Castalian spring)
 What God, or else what Dev'l, was pleas'd to aid,
 The bold contrivance of this quondam maid?—

All-potent Chance! (as some will have it) Fate!
 Chief cause why these are little, those are great;
 Who oft does seem at random to dispense
 Those gifts which flow from bounteous Providence,
 Who giv'st to fools profusion and a name;
 Contempt to merit, and to dancers fame;
 To Britons beef—to Frenchmen wooden shoes;
 To me Consumption and the hungry Muse;

All-

All-potent Chance ! the glorious work was thine—
When—how—and where, declare ye sacred Nine !—
From bustling throngs and scenes of clouded smoke,
To where meand'ring flows the limpid brook ;
Where meek Contentment treads the verdant glade,
And vocal songsters welcome ev'ry shade ;
Or (in plain English if to sing 'tis meet)
From the dull city to their country seat,
By thee conducted, on a summer's day,
The Infant and it's tutor happ'd to stray :
There too, if public legends tell aright,
They both agreed to pass the tranquil night.
Had this but chanc'd some hundred years ago,
The priest had ward'd off the coming blow :
Then reverend saints knew Inspiration's rays ;
But parsons are no prophets now-a-days.

At home remain'd the grave parental lord,
To coax his rib, and watch his fav'rite hoard.
Give womankind one glimpse of am'rous sport,
And if they lose it—why then blame them for't,
Oft times had maids, like *honest* statesmen fee'd,
Betray'd their trust, and truth's abandon'd creed :
With joy accepted, and with ardour read,
Full many a billet-deux by them convey'd,

Replete

Replete with flames that burnt, e'en like the de'el,
 The paper; or, at least, would melt the seal;
 Had 'twixt the parties settled ev'ry matter,
 (That is, if once the Infant could come at her)
 To give, like Washington, it's guards the slip,
 And dauntless venture on a northern trip.

Soon as they found, by many a watchful scout,
 (Who ey'd their parting, and observ'd their route)
 That full-rigg'd rev'rence and his Infant charge
 Were gone o'er rural plains to rove at large—
 A faithful courier to their lone abode,
 Charg'd with dispatches from their council, rode—
 Arriv'd—on ev'ry side he cautious peeps;
 Around the place with artful cunning creeps,
 And (blest event!) he found it tête à tête
 With buxom Doll behind the postern gate:
 Who, in return for many a bounteous meed,
 Taught how through Love's dark lab'rinth to proceed;
 Chance, who in this as ev'ry other part
 Was pleas'd, you see, to second female art,
 Had sent his Rev'rence (wherefoe'er you please)
 To give to burthen'd Nature—Nature's ease.
 Strait to it's infant hand the artful knave,
 The grateful packet of his mistress gave.

Advis'd

Advis'd that, by renown'd postilions guided,
 Chariots and Chariot-horses were provided;
 Bids him be ready to depart with speed
 When night should veil the spheres—"agreed! agreed!"
 Mean time the matrons, now elate with joy,
 Prepar'd each engine for this fam'd decoy—
 At close of day they quit the noisy town
 To beat the covert where the bird was flown;
 And (wonderful to tell!) this female throng,
 Like Bruno's sons, in silence past along.

Long time in dread suspense conceal'd they lay,
 Chear'd by the light of Cynthia's silver ray—
 Cynthia! that pale-fac'd, prim immortal prude,
 Who'd skulk behind a vapour if she could—
 At length as near the rural dome they cringe,
 With sounds discordant grates the turning hinge.—

'Twas now the hour when am'rous dons prepare
 To thrumb their love tales on the soft guitar;
 Below the curs were stretch'd upon the floor;
 Above the Parson snor'd, or seem'd to snore:
 What sport kept John awake with buxom Nell,
 Ill fits it whilst Diana reigns to tell—
 Beneath the stars which 'cross the Welkin shoot,
 Unconscious slumber'd each domestic brute—

All but misf puffs, who, in the orchard squalling,
 Like the young Infant-Heir was caterwauling.
 With gentle step and anxious care it trod,
 And figh'd a pray'r to ev'ry fav'ring God—
 Seen by the quiv'ring glimmer of the moon,
 The nymphs behold, and strait to meet it run—
 But first he greets a brother of the thong,
 Well-skill'd to guide the rapid car along;
 Abash'd, and quaking like an aspen leaf,
 He thus bespoke his horse's noble chief:
 " For this delay, dear Will, I beg thy pardon;
 " But take, my lad, this guinea, and drive hard on."
 Pleas'd with the boon the booted spark prepares
 To drive with headlong speed his panting mares.
 By this the Widow in her folding arms
 The Infant clasp'd, and gave it half her charms;
 Within the car is plac'd the smiling boy;
 Sounds the loud whip to—keck—gee-up!—evoy!
 Nor less their bliss than when the sons of Greece,
 Like them triumphant bore the *golden fleece*!

In that fam'd vision of the Bard of old,
 When ev'ry dream did mystic truths unfold,
 Chariots in chariots mov'd; and (strange to tell!)
 Spoke within spoke, and wheel was wedg'd in wheel.

But

But what might pass, within the car, unseen ;
 And if *machine* was mov'd within *machine*,
 Is work in which, all readers will aver,
 No Bard on earth has right to interfere—
 Yet might conjecture form a random guess,
 Fancy would pair her with our regent Bess—
 Who, when her num'rous lovers fought her throne,
 By sly pretences kept them off and on—

Widows with art arrange their martial tire ;
 Know when to give, and when reserve their fire.
 To steer by stars, that with pure lustre shine
 Discretion's length—but never pass the line—
 Suppose we then the INFANT on her lap
 Indulg'd with, now and then, the swelling pap—
 For well we know that ev'ry infant looby,
 Will sigh and whimper when refus'd the bubbly—
 Suppose we too, whene'er it whim'd and cry'd,
 She gave *it* that and something else beside ;
 That many a time she clasp'd it to her breast,
 Gave what she durst and let it dream the rest.

All this suppos'd—one supposition more,
 That now they're snug on Caledonia's shore.
 Soon as (in which is bound their future lot)
 A tag-rag priest had ty'd the Gordian knot,

Quick

Quick they proceed, to make the work secure,
From Love's high fever to it's pleasing cure.

The quondam Widow, now once more a wife,
Like one just rais'd from death to second life,
Exclaim'd, as consummation bliss began,
" Ne'er did an INFANT act so like a man !"

I hate the bard who bids the volume rise
Sheet upon sheet for sixpence in the price !
Who ne'er will pass one dirty kennel by,
But tells you if the stream ran low or high ;
Else here what loads of nonsense might go down
To cheat my drowsy friends of half a crown !

Thus sparing paper, ink, pens, lines, and you,
Instead of ninety take the rest in two :

—Awhile at Cupid's shrine they off'rings burn'd,
Then clos'd his sacred temple and return'd.

Return we now, o'er many a craggy steep,
To where we left the parson fast asleep.

The sun was high, ere yawning from his doze,
With many a lounging stretch his Rev'rence rose ;
Scarce half array'd a quid or two he chews,
Calls for his morning bev'rage and the news.

" News ! Sir—alas ! the footman fighting said,

" Then shook his hanging ears, and scratch'd his head !

" Ah !

" Ah me! ah me!"—" Why prythee, John, what now?"

" Sure no ill fate has brought the clergy low!"

" No daring pen," he said, and set his wig,

" Attacks tythe-goose, tythe-apple, or tythe-pig?"

" Oh no! oh no!"—" Then let no time be lost;

" Bring in my tea, my coffee, and a toast,

" Set out the side-board for my luncheon treat,

" For, starve who will, my lad, the church must eat—

" Else how conduct each pious Christian brother

" On the long journey from this world to t'other?"

" Call down the Infant—fegs! 'tis ten o'clock!

" High time we were at hammer, nail, and block!

" Go, rouse him, quick!"—" Ah! Sir (said honest John)

" That work, I fear, by others has been done!"

" How! John! why sure you've heard of no disaster?"

" Have patience, and I'll tell you, honour'd master."—

This said—poor John in anguish clear'd the case,

Authentic from the Barber of the place,

Who ey'd the deed as o'er his jug of purl

He late had labour'd at the stubborn curl.

" Humph! (cry'd the parson) reach that slice of ham.

"—Gone off! you say? Go, bring me up a dram,

" Some dæmon sure my aching stomach gripes!

" And—hark'e, John—Tobacco and some pipes!"

Sad John obeys, and soon the fatal stroke
 Is lost in fumes of usquebaugh and smoke.
 Scarce had Aurora op'd the gates of light,
 And clear'd each vestige of the Infant's flight,
 When tattling Rumour blab'd the wondrous tale;
 And sportive jests and cutting sneers prevail.
 His reverence saw the storm was in the wind,
 But like a godlike Christian sat resign'd.

Not so his fate the raving parent bore,
 But foam'd like waves that lash the founding shore,
 And wish'd the widow and her faithless crew
 With Rev'rence at the Dev'l, and further too!

Ere long the band, their various labours o'er,
 Return triumphant in a coach and four:
 The Parent (in whose breast resentment burns,
 Where fierce-contending passions rule by turns),
 Soon as his ravish'd Cub appear'd in sight
 Roar'd like a tyger ardent for the fight.
 Cast in the roughest mould of all his kind,
 Whose clay the hand of Nature ne'er refin'd;
 Foe to that smile which gay contentment wears,
 And long conversant with his kindred BEARS;
 Ne'er by the soft'ring care of Science taught
 To raise his mind 'bove what he sold or bought;

Honest,

Honest, because detection's fears controul,
 And *just*, to save his credit—not his soul;
 Whose stream of pelf, though high and full it flows,
 Ne'er to the pitch of gen'rous friendship rose;
 But in it's banks (where weeds and sedges grow,
 And mud and vermin form the bed below)
 Rolls on confin'd, with ev'ry thing but stealth,
 To swell still more his vast abyfs of wealth.
 Such is the man—or such the two-legg'd brute,
 Whom anger prompts to urge the vengeful suit;
 In Hymen's *northern bonds* to find a flaw,
 And catch our wild-game in the net of law.
 By T——'s hand that fatal net was cast—
 The birds were seiz'd, but breathless 'scap'd at last

Whether, as fierce he gave the furious swing,
 'Twas stretch'd too far, and crack'd the slender string;
 Or if 'twas broke in some ill-mended spot,
 Is what this sage deponent voucheth not.

Still in his breast the parent felt the gall,
 Still hugg'd his rage, as misses hug their doll.
 One morn, when many a bill remain'd unpay'd,
 And, Infant-like, 'a sixpence too had stray'd;
 Too high it swell'd within due bounds to stay,
 And, like the delug'd torrent forc'd it's way.

Thick

Thick vapours burst, and in a pelting show'r,
 With copious flow, the streams of vengeance pour—
 The Infant felt, and, like the patient worm,
 Collected stood the fury of the storm :
 But, tho' not oft it's spark of vengeance burn,
 If trampled down the reptile e'en will turn.
 Thus when th' uplifted cudgel from above,
 Shew'd the desert of vanish'd feasts of love,
 Then first the mettled Infant silence broke,
 Some God inspiring as he boldly spoke :
 So Balaam's ass, when by an angel crost,
 With many a kick and weighty blow embost,
 (Unable more such anguish keen t'abide)
 Argu'd the knotty point, and sav'd his hide.

“ That I have ta'en this maid, it is most true,
 “ True I have wed her, unapprov'd by you—
 “ Such is my crime—if you a crime can name
 “ The pure delight of Hymen's sacred flame.
 “ If so—since parents should their infants lead,
 “ Your own example justifies the deed :
 “ Now, without sep'rate tables or divorce,
 “ Thrice mounted on the marriage hobby-horse,
 “ When I beheld you, with ill-fashion'd bows,
 To F——'s relict pay your ardent vows ;

“ When

" When lawyers conn'd the taylor's memoirs o'er,
 " And the patch'd breeches * set them in a roar ;
 " As if conducted by some mystic wire,
 " Your blood within me caught th' electric fire :
 " Since then fresh fewel added by degrees,
 " As brooks make rivers, rivers swell to seas—
 " (No cooling show'r it's fury to assuage,)
 " The gath'ring fire has burnt with furious rage ;
 " Till Paddy-like, (so fierce at last it rose)
 " I fear'd by Gog, 'twould finge my very cloaths—
 " To check its progress in it's fierce career,
 " I took a *patent she-extinguisher*—
 " For this, as culprits at the awful bar,
 " Expos'd to all the snares of *legal* war,
 " Entrench'd in wigs where Th—ow holds full sway,
 " And quibbling pleaders urge the verbal fray,
 " Like Christians smit by Persecution's sword
 " We felt its edge—but answer'd not a word—
 " Had I, like Th—ow, spurn'd those *idle* rules
 " That bind with Hymen's chain weak *moral* fools ;
 " Had I, regardless of her dire disgrace,
 " Woo'd some fair *bar-maid* to my lewd embrace,

* Mr. Sch—r, we are told, when he brought an action against the Lady in question, for the recovery of money expended on her account, in consequence of their matrimonial agreement, among other estimates produced his taylor's bill, in which the sum of 3s. 6d. for the seating of a pair of silk breeches was not forgot—As it was presumed he meant to have figured away with them at the ceremony, the circumstance afforded no small merriment to the Bench and Spectators.

" Then had I fav'd my bacon and your pride ;
 " And Law and Nature both been satisfy'd—
 " Hard case to act from prying censure free,
 " When Nature, Law, and Honour disagree !
 " Nor deem me wedded to an empty span—
 " With her I grasp three hundred pounds *per ann.*—
 " Pleas'd at the sound each ear the parent cocks—
 " Three hundred ?"—"And two thousand in the stock—
 " But tho', like Job when Satan fir'd his house,
 " She sat in rags, without one single sous,
 " If to my flame and to my int'rests true,
 " Beneath my steps she Pleasure's flow'rets strew—
 " What more can Fate bestow to make me blest,
 " Since largely Fortune has bestow'd the rest ?—
 " If yet, in spite of all that love can plead,
 " You still maintain I've pluck'd an humble weed,—
 " Reflect that now, since Fate the work hath ended,
 " In vain, dear Sir, you rack your brains to mend it."
 The parent heard, and was well pleas'd to hear
 The former clod assume the orator—
 Awhile he paus'd—then sudden cry'd—" Egad !
 " Love has improv'd thy intellects, my lad !—
 " 'Till now, whene'er I urg'd thee to hold forth,
 " 'Twas—A—and—WELL—like T—d or L—d N—h—
 " But now thy nimble member goes to work
 " With all the brisk agility of B—ke—

" Three

“ Three hundred—and two thousand—let me see
 “ Why.—yes—’twill do to find her pins and tea—
 “ And since, if deep or slight the galling wound,
 “ ’Tis clear no healing med’cine can be found ;
 “ E’en let us while the sun revives—make hay,
 “ And, once for all, let Nature take it’s way.
 “ How this may end the Lord alone can tell,
 “ One truth is clear—all’s well that endeth well—
 “ So, Jack, my boy, good-night”—he said, and rung
 the bell.

The footman hears, and brings them flaming sconces ;
 When both retire to **** their *Caro Sponsas*.—

Thus have I sung in many an artless rhyme,
 Gay, if not smooth—and blythe, if not sublime ;
 How female art, by Love and Plutus fir’d,
 ’Gain’st a young Infant’s simple heart conspir’d—
 And how, seduc’d by potent *charms* divine,
 This INFANT victim flam’d at Cupid’s shrine—

Henceforth ye Guardians, faithful to your trust,
 Take heed—or soon your INFANTS will be noos’d :
 Learn hence ye buxom widows fair or brown,
 When men grow scarce an Infant may go down.
 And O ! ye Fair, who, when you deign to smile,
 Crown each perfection of this beauteous isle !
 Who soon must learn with rapture to explore
 Those hidden streights that ne’er were past before !

Attend

Attend this lay---nor with a frown refuse
 The fond forebodings of an Infant Muse !
 Tho' wide-destructive war (heart-chilling truth !)
 Blast the ripe fruit of many a mellow youth ;
 Tho' (fatal case !) the few who yet remain
 In lew'd debauch pure Nature's juices drain !
Infants shall cancel manhood's dire disgrace,
 And *Infants* still prolong the *Infant* race !

Sooner their feasts of joy with yours to blend,
 Shall males like manna from the clouds descend ;
 Sooner, your thirst of pleasure's lymph to fill,
 Shall streams of bliss from barren rocks distil ;
 Than you, fair Nymphs, to such extremes be driv'n
 As e'er to lack the choicest gift of Heav'n !

What tho' the plains of manhood fallow lie,
 Chear'd by no sun, and water'd by no sky ?
 A field unreapt invites each blooming wife,
 Sown with the rich prolific seeds of life :
 A field of bearded corn, and free from tares,
 Strew'd with no thorns, and unbeset with snares ;
 Where vig'rous health will round you closely twine,
 Like youthful ivy round the luscious vine !
 Long may you there the fruits of rapture taste !
 Long may you riot in the rich repast !
 Love's ore be yours unmixt with base alloy !
 And vig'rous *INFANTS* crown your ev'ry joy !

F I N I S.